

SPEECH

OF

ON. JOHN L. TAYLOR, OF OHIO,

ON

THE ARMY BILL, THE VETO POWER,

AND

THE ORDINANCE OF 1787:

DELIVERED

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE UNITED STATES,

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## SPEECH.

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In the House of Representatives of the United States. The House being in Committee of the Whole on the state of the Union, and having under consideration a Bill making appropriations for the support of the Army, for the year ending the thirtieth of June, one thousand eight hundred and forty-one,

Mr. TAYLOR, of Ohio, said—

Mr. CHAIRMAN: After sitting here a very attentive member of this body for nearly eight months, listening with great pleasure, and occasionally with some instruction, to gentlemen on all sides of this House; and, after being detained here now about nine hours since we met this morning, I feel too much exhausted to submit the views I wish to present to this committee on some of the questions and subjects that now agitate the public mind, as I would like to do in the Congress of the United States.

Nevertheless, I am determined, having now obtained the floor for the first time during this session, when I could discuss questions of a general nature and of public interest, to proceed with my remarks. And I shall do so with that freedom and boldness which becomes a Representative of a free and intelligent people, neither caring for the men who occupy, temporarily, the high places in the country, nor for any others who may follow in their train. I shall proceed to express the views I entertain upon these public questions as best I may, and as I deem it my duty to express them, in accordance with the well-settled opinions of the majority of those who sent me here.

I concur most heartily in many of the views of my distinguished friend, the honorable gentleman from the city of New York, (Mr. TALLMADGE,) as to the vast waste of time in this House, the irregularity of our proceedings, and the strong necessity of some reform in regard to the rules of proceeding in the House of Representatives, in order to prevent that disorder, that oppression, and that injury now inflicted upon a vast portion of the people of the country, and procure the more equal distribution of the *time* of the House to the several Congressional districts of the United States.

Of the two hundred and thirty members composing this House, only some forty or fifty are permitted to take part in its deliberations and discussions; and those of us, who are styled *new* members, are virtually excluded from all participation in the proceedings of this body by the oppressive rules of the House. It is disreputable to the Representatives of the people of the United States, that they cannot here form a system of rules which will allow every gentleman to take part in the debates, and express freely the wishes and views of his constituents. If it be my lot to be sent back here, I will urge the necessity of such a revision of the rules, as shall restrain the men who obtrude themselves upon this House too frequently, and which shall tend to equalize the time among the various Congressional districts of the people of the United States. Thus much I say, in order that my constituents may understand how it is, that I, in common with so many other members, so rarely have had an opportunity to express my views; and that the country may know why it is, that many of the intelligent members on all sides of the House, many of those on the opposite side of this Hall, as well as many of my political friends around me, are not heard during a long session of Congress.

I now proceed.

Mr. Chairman, we are now in Committee of the Whole on the state of the Union upon the bill making appropriations for the support of the Army of the United States

for the year ending the 30th June, 1849; a bill appropriating a vast amount of money, some ten or twelve millions of dollars, for the support of this branch of the public service alone. I am content to leave the framing of this bill, the appropriations therein proposed, the examination of the estimates upon which they are founded, and all its details, to the intelligent Committee of Ways and Means who have reported it; for it is well known to this committee, that it is impossible for individual members to investigate every item. I shall willingly vote for the whole amount asked for, as I have readily and cheerfully voted for all necessary supplies since I have had the honor of a seat in this House. And I here take occasion to say, that while some of our political opponents have taunted the Whig party as unwilling to vote supplies to carry on the General Government, some of the distinguished and leading members on the opposite side of this House—amongst whom I might name the ex-chairman of the Committee of Ways and Means, (Mr. McKAY,) now a member of that committee, and after he had aided to mature the bill for the support of the Navy of the United States—withheld their votes from that bill. Nay, sir, they voted against it. And thus this important arm of our national defence, that which guards the commerce of the country, that Navy which protects our extensive sea-board, and carries the flag of the Republic in honor around our coast and throughout the whole world, must rely for a majority vote in this House upon the Whig party! Yes, sir; the honorable member from North Carolina, and many gentlemen on that side of the Hall, after voting against the Naval Appropriation bill, stand up here, and with an impudence and effrontery as glaring as it is untrue, accuse the Whig party of withholding supplies for the army and navy, and for the support of the civil government of the United States.

I listened with much pleasure to my honorable colleague, (Mr. MILLER,) who has just taken his seat, and I was glad to see him have the opportunity of expressing, for the first time, his views upon some of the great questions of the day. But I think he was peculiarly unfortunate in making his first demonstration upon the so-called "Compromise bill," which was sent here the other day from the other branch of Congress, and which he commends to the favorable notice of the country, while he denounces us upon this side for promptly laying that bill upon the table.

My colleague must have forgotten that, during the last session of the General Assembly of the State of Ohio, a resolution was passed by both branches, unanimously, or nearly so, instructing our Senators, and requesting our Representatives, in Congress, to vote to incorporate the principles of the ordinance of 1787, into any law that might be passed to establish a territorial government for Oregon, or any territory we might acquire from Mexico by treaty, or otherwise; and that, in the vote in this House, five only of the twenty-one Representatives from the State of Ohio, voted against laying that bill on the table. Then, sir, how is the sense of the State of Ohio declared here? A very large majority of her Representatives—all the Whig Representatives who did vote, and four of the nine Democratic members from the State of Ohio who gave a vote on that occasion—united to lay that mis-called "Compromise bill" on the table, and for the very best reasons, which, if my time does not prove too short, I propose to inquire into.

But I will remark here—and the country should know—that while the Senate of the United States have spent nearly five months in discussing the great principles involved in this "Compromise bill," which they have just prepared and sent to us—after a discussion which has elicited the best talents of the land—in which gentlemen from the North and from the South, from the East and West, have vied with each other in the strongest and ablest arguments they could adduce—they have met together, and sent us a "Compromise bill," not sustained by a very large majority of their own body, which they expected us to pass without discussion in a few days. Sir, we could not do it. It is well known, Mr. Chairman, that in the early part of this session a bill providing a territorial government for the Territory of Oregon was reported by the honorable member from Indiana, (Mr. CALEB B. SMITH,) who is chairman of the Committee on Territories, prepared by that committee; and

that at the very time the "Compromise bill" came to us from the Senate, our own bill relating to Oregon was under discussion, and was nearly matured; that the bill which originated in this House for that purpose has been since passed by this body, and is now before the Senate for their concurrence. That bill passed this House by a vote of more than two to one; and a section excluding slavery from Oregon forever, was made a part of it. In this way we have shown to the country our desire to act promptly for the people of Oregon, and have demonstrated to the country that we laid that "Compromise bill" on the table, not with a view to defeat the organization of the Territory of Oregon, but that the House of Representatives, at least, are willing to grant to that country what they desire, and what has too long been denied to them.

Yes, Mr. Chairman, a territorial government of the best kind has been given to to them by this House; such as was guarantied to all the northwestern territory, which has grown up under it so admirably, that the free institutions of the States which have been formed out of it, are the admiration of all the world; and whose prosperity and growth in everything that renders man great, and prosperous, and happy, have been the miracle of the age in which we live.

I intend before I get through to recur more particularly to this subject; that is, to the form of government which the Congress of the United States shall give to Oregon, and to the territories we have acquired from Mexico.

I understand that the chairman of the Committee on Territories (Mr. SMITH, of Indiana) announces to this House, that he was ready to present to our consideration carefully prepared bills, for the newly acquired territories of California and New Mexico; and that he has not yet, under the rules of the House, been allowed to report them. There is ample time to pass those bills. I trust if they come before us in the proper form that they will be passed. I am ready to give my vote for such bills at any time.

I wish now to present some views, Mr. Chairman, upon a subject which is deeply agitating the public mind, and which, it seems to me, has not been properly estimated in the discussions in this committee. I mean the great subject of the *Veto Power*, as conferred by the Constitution of the United States upon the President, and the manner in which it has been exercised for the last fifteen or twenty years, by our Presidents—particularly by the present Chief Magistrate.

To examine the conduct of the men who are temporarily invested with power by the people, and to scrutinize their acts whilst they occupy the high places of the Republic, and thereby guard the public interest and the Constitution which we are sworn to support, is the great duty of a Representative of a free people; and this duty I shall endeavor faithfully to perform.

I shall, in the first place, review as briefly as I can, some of the leading measures of the Federal Government, since Mr. James K. Polk, the present chief magistrate, came into office; and exhibit to the country, the enormous and alarming tendency of the party now in office, to concentrate the powers of this Government, in the hands of one man, thereby changing in practice the beautiful theory of our republican Government, to a tyrannical despotism.

For this purpose let us look back for a moment to the 4th March, 1845.

On that day, the President of the United States, was inaugurated, with all the forms and ceremonies usual on such occasions; and, in looking over his inaugural address, our attention is arrested by several important indications therein given, of the course of policy which he intended to pursue.

With a predetermination to exercise all the extraordinary powers which he might desire to usurp during his administration, in that inaugural address he fore-shadows his design to exercise frequently the *Presidential veto*, by "*substituting the mere discretion and caprice of the Executive*," for the will of the majority of the people, as expressed by their Representatives in Congress. I will ask the attention of this committee, and of the country, to these remarkable sentences in that first presidential declaration of President Polk:

"This most admirable system of well regulated self-government among men, ever devised by human minds, has been tested by its successful operation for more than half a century; and if preserved from the usurpations of the Federal Government on the one hand, and the exercise by the States of powers not reserved to them on the other, will, I fervently hope and believe, endure for ages to come, and dispense the blessings of civil and religious liberty to distant generations. To effect objects so dear to every patriot, I shall devote myself with anxious solicitude. It will be my desire to guard against that most fruitful source of danger to the harmonious actions of our system, which consists in substituting the mere discretion and caprice of the Executive, or of majorities in the legislative department of the Government, for powers which have been withheld from the Federal Government by the Constitution. By the theory of our Government, majorities rule." \* \* "That the blessings of liberty which our Constitution secures, may be enjoyed alike by majorities and minorities, the Executive has been wisely invested with a qualified veto upon the acts of the legislature. It is a negative power, and is conservative in its character. It arrests for the time, hasty, inconsiderate, or unconstitutional legislation, and transfers questions at issue between the legislative and executive departments, to the tribunal of the people. Like all other powers, it is subject to be abused."

Here, sir, we have an argument in favor of the veto power, even in the inaugural address of Mr. Polk. The first sentence in this declaration is one of those truisms to which none of us object. All are of opinion that our constitutional form of republican Government, is the wisest and best devised, ever formed by men; and to preserve it from usurpations by the Chief Executive Magistrate of the Federal Government should be a primary object with every American patriot. Nor should the States of this Union exercise powers not reserved to them.

But the promise at that time, made by the President of the United States, has been grossly and frequently violated. The "*discretion and caprice of the Executive*," to use his own words, have been frequently substituted for the constitutional duty to guard against federal usurpations; and the most salutary legislation has been thwarted, and rendered null and void, by the capricious and criminal interposition of the Executive veto. Who shall decide what powers are withheld from the legislative department of this Government, from Congress, by the Constitution of the United States? Did any man of sense, did any free American citizen, who can read the Constitution, and understand his rights and his dignity as an American citizen, ever grant for a moment, that any President—much less Mr. James K. Polk—was to decide what powers the Constitution withheld from Congress? Surely not! Have we not a Supreme Court of the United States, whose duty it is to give a construction to your laws when necessary, and to decide upon their constitutionality? But it seems to me very manifest that when these sentences were uttered, Mr. Polk had a presentiment that his opinions were behind the age in which he lives; that they were at variance with the Constitution of his country; that a majority in Congress had long since condemned and repudiated them; and that it was necessary in advance to shadow them forth, and to intimate to Congress that this kingly power, this monarchical feature in our Constitution, should be held up to them, to intimidate the Representatives of the people, and drive them into a craven submission to his will and power.

I trust, Mr. Chairman, the day may never arrive, when any intelligent Representative of the people, will be so recreant to his high and responsible trust, as to consult, in advance, the opinions and views of any President, as to what his rights are under the Constitution. But that he may study that great charter of our freedom, and study the history of the men who formed it, and the circumstances under which they acted, and be guided rather by the glorious lights and intellects of the Revolution, than by any Will-of-the-Wisp Lanterns of Locofoco Democracy. Truly was it said, in that inaugural address, that "the most fruitful source of danger to the harmonious action of our system consists in substituting the mere discretion and caprice of the Executive, for powers which have been withheld from the Federal Government by the Constitution." Yes, sir, not only a fruitful source of danger to the harmonious action of our republican system, but to the rights of the people, as they are guaranteed by the Constitution of the United States.

The legislative power of this country is vested in the Congress of the United States. Let us read from the Constitution itself, what is said on this subject. The first section of the first article of that great charter of American freedom reads thus:

*"All legislative powers herein granted, shall be vested in a Congress of the United States, which shall consist of a Senate and House of Representatives."*

And this is the whole power. And though the laws passed by Congress are, by the Constitution, to be submitted to the President for his approval, yet it never was contemplated by the framers of it, that the mere *"discretion and caprice of the Executive"* should be substituted for the will of a majority of the Congress of the United States.

That inaugural address further declared, "that by the *theory* of our Government majorities rule;" as if to indicate to us, in advance, that no matter how important the legislation of Congress, no matter how wise, how necessary, how indispensable to the general welfare, or how imperiously demanded by the calls of the people, or the demands of justice, yet it is only by the *theory* of our Government that a majority can enact laws to meet the pressing exigency of the times, and that a Presidential co-operation is absolutely indispensable in all cases. That a majority of Congress, no matter how large and decided, should not control, under any circumstances, but that the Presidential prerogative must be conciliated and consulted; and that no act of legislation should pass except by the odious two-thirds rule, unless it be the will and pleasure of *one man*—the federal Chief Magistrate.

How odious is this unfounded and unconstitutional pretension to the great body of the people! How utterly at variance with the practice of the Government under the early Presidents! And how arbitrary and anti-democratic in practice! How totally at war with the administration of THOMAS JEFFERSON, whose name is constantly on the lips of demagogues, as their exemplar, but whose real example is rarely, if ever, followed by any of the modern progressive Democracy. *Sir, President Jefferson, during the eight years of his administration, never exercised this odious veto power.* And in the very commencement of the Government, General WASHINGTON, during the eight years of his administration, never exercised it but in two instances. Neither Presidents John Adams, John Quincy Adams, nor Martin Van Buren, during the twelve years of their administrations, ever exercised this odious power. It is anti-republican; and when used upon mere questions of expediency, as in the case of the French Spoliation bill, or upon the mere discretion and caprice of the Executive, tends rapidly and inevitably to enlarge Executive power and authority, to restrain the free action of the Representatives of the people, and to destroy the great objects of legislation. Sir, for what do we assemble here? Is it as the mere agents of the Executive authority—to raise money, to pass appropriation bills to carry on the civil departments, to pay your army and navy? Is it to catch, by such VETO messages as President Polk sends here, the opinions, and to do the biddings, of a tyrannical President? No, sir; no.

The people have elected us as their Representatives, who know their wants, to present their opinions upon public questions, to redress their grievances, to protect their just rights, to guard the public interests, to legislate for their best interests, public and private, as we deem best, and as the true interests of the country demand. We do not sit here to inquire and act as the President may dictate. But receiving from him the usual information as to the state of the Union, which he is required by the Constitution to communicate, we are thereupon required, by the oaths we have taken to support the Constitution, to act upon our own judgments and knowledge of the wants of the people of the country, without reference to the President's opinions. Now, sir, what do we hear in this House, almost daily, in debate? Why, sir, inquiries the most offensive to an independent Representative of a free people.

We are told by our opponents on the other side of this Hall that General Cass will veto the Wilmet proviso, if the Representatives of the people should hereafter enact it; during his term of service, if he be elected, (which God forbid!) And we are pressed with the inquiry—"What will General Taylor do in the event of his election to the Presidency?" "If he be elected President, would he veto any act that might be passed by Congress extending the principles of the ordinance of

1787 over the Territories of the United States recently acquired from Mexico." Now, sir, I do not want the *pledges* of *Lewis Cass*, or *Zachary Taylor*, on this subject in advance, as to what either will do if he be elected President of the United States. Especially, sir, I do not wish a Presidential candidate, no matter what are his opinions on this or any other subject, to *pledge himself in advance* as to the course he would pursue, when a bill, passed by both Houses of Congress, may be presented to him for his approval. A patriot and a statesman, who has the good of his country at heart, and is determined to endeavor to discharge his duty faithfully and honestly, under the Constitution, ought not to *pledge himself*, in advance of his election, that he would or would not, as President, *veto* any particular measure that Congress might adopt. It is against the free and untrammelled action and rights of American citizens that any *pledges* of this kind should be brought to bear in our popular elections, by any party, or candidate of a party.

And hence the wide and striking difference in the position of the two candidates now before us for the Presidency. How is this? We find that General Cass has, according to the assertions of his political friends here, avowed his opposition to a particular measure so broadly, that, if elected President, he would not approve a law excluding slavery from the newly acquired Territories. Nay, sir, they assert on this floor that he is *pledged to veto* any such law if passed by Congress; that their candidate for the Presidency would *veto* a law establishing the Wilmot proviso, no matter how large the majority by which it might be passed. So that nothing less than two-thirds of this House could enact such a law. And they triumphantly ask us—"What will Zachary Taylor do, if he be elected?" "Has he given any *pledges* to the American people that he will *veto* such a law?" No, sir, he has given no pledges to check or thwart the will of the people; and it is in conformity with the honest character of the man, to act with the delicacy and propriety becoming his position, to refrain from giving *pledges* in advance, what he will, and what he will not *veto*. But he contents himself by giving his opinion of the *veto power*, as he understands it, under the Constitution. In what a glorious attitude does this place the candidate of the Whig party? And how favorably does his position contrast with that of the candidate of the *Locofoco* party upon this important subject?

Our opponents may find ample cause of complaint on the part of the Whigs of the Union, when they reflect upon the wonderful strides this enormous power has made since the inauguration of *Andrew Jackson* as President of the United States.

During the first twenty years after the adoption of the Constitution of the United States, that is, during the eight years of *General Washington's* administration, the four years of *President John Adams's* administration, and the eight years of *President Jefferson's* administration, there were only two occasions upon which the Executive *veto* was interposed. *General Washington*, during the eight years he was President, only exercised the *veto power* twice: and, Mr. Chairman, this was in the infancy of the Government, when the principles of the Constitution had not been studied by the great body of the people and their Representatives, as they have been since. It is true, that some of those who framed the Constitution were still in the public service, as members of Congress; but there were many new members who might, with the best motives, have acted hastily and unadvisedly.

*President John Adams*, who administered the Government for four years, never exercised the *veto power*.

*President Jefferson* did not exercise it at all during his service of eight years.

*President John Quincy Adams*, during his term of four years, never exercised this extraordinary power. Nor did *President Van Buren* exercise it during his term of four years.

And yet *President Tyler*, in the short term of four years, exercised this great power on seven important occasions, and until his administration became perfectly odious to the whole country.

*President Polk*, during his brief occupancy of the White House, has exercised this power of the *veto* on three most important occasions; defeating, by his single

opinion, the wishes of large majorities in Congress, in favor of two *River and Harbor bills* and the *French Spoliation bill*; the last purely upon the ground of expediency. The River and Harbor bills, vetoed by Mr. Polk, were bills of the utmost importance to the commerce of our great Western lakes and our Western rivers; particularly the bill passed at the last session of Congress, entitled "An act to provide for constructing a certain public work in the Territory of Wisconsin, and for other purposes." That bill was retained by the President, and died "a natural death," not having been approved or signed during the Congress in which it originated. But having revised all the old and fallacious arguments against internal improvements by the General Government, which were put forth by himself and others twenty years ago, when they were members of this House, the President of the United States, on the 13th day of March last, sent to this House, without any call from us, and without solicitation—nay, sir, I might say with an impudence and effrontery unprecedented, this River and Harbor bill, passed by another Congress, and with which we had nothing to do, with a most elaborate *veto* message accompanying it. Now, sir, why was this done? Manifestly with the view of advising us of his old opinions on this subject, and which he might have thought necessary, as the great majority of this Congress is comprised of new members, whose opinions of the powers of the General Government upon this highly interesting subject were at variance with his own. By looking at this gratuitous *veto* message and argument of the President, it may be seen that he refers with an air of triumph to that capricious and tyrannical act of Andrew Jackson, in vetoing what is usually called the Maysville Road bill. Many gentlemen here will recollect the circumstances under which that bill was destroyed by the odious *veto*. If I recollect the history of that measure, it passed both Houses of Congress by the votes of leading and distinguished members of both the great parties in the country. Amongst those who voted for that bill I find the names of Messrs. *Benton, Webster, Buchanan, Doddridge, Burritt, Rowan, Richard M. Johnson*, and others equally distinguished. It proposed to authorize a subscription of about \$150,000 to the stock of the macadamized turnpike road, leading from Maysville to Lexington, in Kentucky; and this stock, was to be paid and held by the United States, on the same terms as the stock of others, the stockholders, in that turnpike road, was paid and held. The road in question, was a link in the great daily southwestern post or mail route, branching from the National road at Zanesville, and passing through Lancaster, Chillicothe, and West Union, in Ohio, to Maysville and Lexington, in Kentucky, and through Nashville, in Tennessee, to Florence, in Alabama, and was the great post road over which the daily mail was conveyed to a large portion of the people in the West and South-east. But this appropriation, made in aid of a work at that time deemed national in its character, was *vetoed* by Andrew Jackson; and the cunning hand and counsel of his prime minister, is visible in every line of that celebrated *veto*. The spleen of President Jackson towards his great rival in the popular esteem, *Henry Clay*, by whose door this road passed, and whose State of Kentucky would have been essentially benefitted by it, and the indulgence of that dictatorial and tyrannical temper for which he was noted, induced that *veto*, which Mr. Polk refers to in justification of his own message of March last. He says that Jackson's *veto* put a check upon the policy of internal improvements. When all of us now know that more money was appropriated for internal improvements, during the eight years of Gen. Jackson's administration, than was appropriated under any other administration in the same time. Here is a list of appropriations during several of the Presidential terms for purposes of internal improvements by the General Government:

Under Mr. Jefferson.....	\$48,400	Under Gen. Jackson.....	\$10,582,882
" Mr. Madison.....	250,800	" Mr. Van Buren.....	2,322,544
" Mr. Monroe.....	707,621	" Mr. Tyler.....	1,076,500
" Mr. J. Q. Adams.....	2,310,475		

Let me now, Mr. Chairman, ask the attention of this committee, to some of the items of the River and Harbor bill, as it is generally called, which Mr. Polk refused to approve, and which he sent to us voluntarily in March last, as I before stated. I



have his veto message and the copy of that bill before me. And I find, among other appropriations, the following:

- “For the harbors at Milwaukee, \$6,000.
- “For the continuation of the breakwater structure at Burlington, on Lake Champlain, \$6,000.
- “For the continuation of the breakwater structure at Plattsburg, on Lake Champlain, \$6,000.
- “For repairing the harbor at Buffalo, on Lake Erie, and the continuation of the sea wall for the protection of the same, \$25,000.
- “For improving the harbor at Dunkirk, on Lake Erie, \$5,000.
- “For improving the harbor at Erie, on Lake Erie, \$12,000.
- “For improving Grand River harbor, on Lake Erie, \$3,000.
- “For improving the harbor at Cleveland, on Lake Erie, \$10,000.
- “For improving the harbor at Sandusky city, on Lake Erie, \$6,000.
- “For improving the River Raisin harbor, on Lake Erie, \$5,000.
- “For constructing a dredge-boat, to be used on Lake Erie, \$12,000.
- “For improving the harbor at St. Joseph, on Lake Michigan, \$6,000.
- “For improving the harbor at Michigan city, on Lake Michigan, \$12,000.
- “For improving the harbor on Chicago, at Lake Michigan, \$8,000.
- “For constructing a dredge boat to be used on Lake Michigan, \$12,000.”

Now, sir, these appropriations were made by Congress, after mature consideration, and with full knowledge of their importance to the great commercial interests of the country. Many of them were made with particular reference to that vast domestic commerce that has grown up on our northern lakes, and in the security and protection of which the whole western country is directly interested. Who, on this floor, has not been fully advised of the immense amount of losses, of life and property, on the great lakes, whose harbors these appropriations were intended to improve? All are well advised of the absolute necessity of these appropriations; and that these great harbors have been somewhat improved by repeated appropriations by Congress, which have been heretofore approved by the Executive. But it is equally well known that continued appropriations are necessary for many of those objects, and that they are of a general nature, in which the whole country is interested, and not the inhabitants of one State alone. That to regulate and facilitate this great commerce “*among the States*,” is within the constitutional power of Congress, and that it has often been exercised. But it must now be suddenly arrested by the caprice of *one man*, by the arbitrary discretion of Mr. James K. Polk, who temporarily fills the chair at the White House! Away with such absurd, such ill-timed, such erroneous exercise of Executive power!

Look at the small sum appropriated for the lake harbors in the State of Ohio. Only \$19,000 to improve three of her principal harbors on the shore of Lake Erie; and even this small sum is insultingly denied her. Look at the appropriation of \$25,000 for repairing the harbor at Buffalo, bordering on a great and growing and beautiful city, that commands an immense amount of the business of the lakes, and which it is of the utmost importance to the western country should be kept in good repair; and even that small appropriation to one of the great commercial points in New York is withheld by the odious *veto* of President Polk.

Let us look at this bill a little further. I find, amongst other items,

- “For completing the Delaware breakwater, \$30,000.
- “For the improvement of Savannah harbor and the naval anchorage near Fort Pulaski, \$25,000.
- “For continuing the public works and removing the obstructions in the Hudson river, \$25,000.
- “For the improvement of the Ohio river above the falls at Louisville, \$40,000.
- “For the improvement of the Ohio river below the falls at Louisville, and of the Mississippi, Missouri, and Arkansas rivers, one hundred and fifty thousand dollars: *Provided*, That of this sum, not to exceed \$25,000, may be applied to the improvement of the Mississippi river at St. Louis, in the discretion of the Secretary of War.”

Here, then, we find an appropriation by Congress of \$40,000 to improve the Ohio river above the falls, withheld by Mr. Polk, to the very great injury of all the States bordering on that river. This, sir, was an appropriation in which the State of Ohio was deeply interested; and particularly the district I represent, as it is bounded on the south by that river, and a very valuable commerce is carried on by steam and other navigation by the people of that part of the State. But Ohio has

been neglected; her commercial interests wholly neglected, by the present Federal Administration. And why should this be so? Are the 2,000,000 of inhabitants within her borders always to be neglected by the General Government? Are the people of that State, now amounting to one-tenth of the whole population of the United States, contributing their full share of the revenues of the country, and bearing their proportion of all the public burthens, to be totally deprived of all the benefits intended by the Federal Union? Sir, I warn gentlemen, who uphold this miserable, narrow, and contracted policy—if not palpable usurpation of power by the President—that whilst we cheerfully vote all needful supplies for the Government—all that is needed to protect the eastern and southern seaboard, and to guard the foreign commerce of the country—that we will not longer stand by as indifferent spectators of this odious and hostile action of the Executive. The whole West will, ere long, rise up here as a giant, and drive into utter oblivion and obscurity, those who so culpably neglect her interests, and daringly withhold her just rights. In the name of the great State I have the honor in part to represent, I demand of the General Government an equal participation in the appropriations to improve our great rivers and harbors; and whilst I have a seat in this Hall, I will never cease to demand it, and to denounce and rebuke those who withhold it.

The important appropriation for the improvement of the rivers Mississippi, Missouri, and Arkansas, and particularly that of the river at St. Louis, were most injuriously withheld by the President; and such a course ought to meet the decisive condemnation of every man interested in the vast commerce of the Mississippi valley.

I have thus, Mr. Chairman, noticed a few of the appropriations intended to be made by Congress in this important bill. It comprised *thirty-nine* distinct objects of internal improvement, for which appropriations were made. It proposed no appropriation for a road or canal, but was intended for the improvement of our great Western rivers and harbors, and other works commenced already, in many instances, and all of them intimately connected with that great domestic commerce which ought to receive a due share of our attention, but which is utterly neglected by the President of the United States.

Then, Mr. Chairman, I deem it my duty here, now, in my place in the House of Representatives of the United States, to *protest*, in the *strongest* manner, in the name and for the people I have the honor to represent, against the tyrannical use of the *veto* power, and to express their decided opposition, their fixed and determined hostility, to the frequent, capricious, and arbitrary exercise of this high federal, this tyrannical power. They believe as I do, that since General Jackson came into office, this *veto* power of the President has been hastily, capriciously, unconstitutional, and tyrannically exercised. And that the best interests of the people have been overlooked and contemned by the too frequent and improper exercise of this great power; that their representatives have been checked and controlled by the arbitrary will and temper of *one* man, in violation of the Constitution and against a vast deal of useful legislation. They look upon it as one of the important political questions now at issue between the two great parties—if not the greatest and most important. And they are determined, in this great struggle for Executive usurpation and prerogative, which threatens to absorb all the Legislative power, to concentrate it in the hands of the President, and to sink the Representatives of the people into utter insignificance—to battle against Executive usurpation while they live, and with all the means they can lawfully exercise.

I speak here not only for my immediate constituents and for myself, but I reiterate the opinions of a large majority, as I believe, of the people of Ohio, who, at a State Convention, held at their State capital, in the month of January last, adopted unanimously the following resolution, and others of a similar character :

*Resolved*, That we have abiding faith in, and will continue to support with undiminished zeal, the great principles of the Whig party, avowed in former contests—Protection to American Industry—a sound Uniform Currency—Internal Improvements—Opposition to the Sub-Treasury scheme—and unflinching resistance to Executive usurpations.

Yes, sir, the people of Ohio will *resist unrelentingly all "Executive usurpation."* And whilst I have the honor of a seat here, as one of their Representatives, I will continue to rebuke and denounce it in every mode in which, in my official and public character, I can rebuke and denounce it.

The proposition of my distinguished and honorable colleague, (Mr. VINTON,) made in the early part of the session, to establish a "*Home Department*," met with my hearty approbation. I hope the time will soon come, when a *Home Department*, such as exists in many foreign States, will be established for the collection and dissemination of statistical and other valuable information, in relation to domestic commerce, internal improvements, agriculture, the mechanic arts, improvements in science and machinery, and other matters intimately connected and identified with the best interests of the people.

Foreign commerce is regulated and guarded by abundant legislation, but domestic and internal commerce has not received the attention it so imperiously demands; in fact, it is almost totally neglected; and, I ask, for what can we make appropriations more beneficial to all parts of the Union, particularly to the great western country?

However, let the blame rest where it belongs. Congress, during the two last sessions, passed bills making appropriations to remove obstructions to our internal commerce, but they met with the *veto*s of President Polk, because, forsooth, he has some conscientious scruples about a power which has been pronounced a constitutional power by many of our ablest and wisest statesmen, and has been actually exercised for more than a quarter of a century. One ground of objection urged by the President in his *veto* messages, to these appropriations for internal improvements, is, that the bill of last session appropriated about half a million of dollars to *thirty-nine* objects of internal improvement, lying in "*several States of this Union.*" But I find, upon examination, that these *thirty-nine* appropriations were of immediate interest to about 22 States, in which they were to be expended, and of national importance to the whole United States. And thus the President of the United States objects to aiding the commerce and navigation of the country, by approving an appropriation of half a million of dollars made by Congress for that purpose, when he is willing to approve any amount of appropriation bills to cover the expenses of the Mexican war, even if they amount to \$100,000,000—a war which this House has solemnly resolved was "*unnecessarily and unconstitutionally commenced by him.*"

I intend, Mr. Chairman, to make some remarks upon the subject of *SLAVERY*—a subject which has been introduced and fully discussed here. It is a subject of the deepest interest to the South and to the North; but is it not also a question of equal importance, whether the President of the United States shall usurp all the legislative power of the country?

MR. MEADE, of Virginia, here inquired if the gentleman from Ohio would permit him to ask a question?

MR. TAYLOR. Certainly.

MR. MEADE. Will the gentleman from Ohio inform this committee if he believes the President should sign a bill containing provisions which he thinks unconstitutional?

MR. TAYLOR. I care not what the President *thinks* is constitutional or unconstitutional. I never inquire as to his opinions in *advance* of my action in this House. And I do not stand here to answer questions, relevant or irrelevant, which gentlemen of the opposite side—friends of the President—may ask, as to what the President will do. But I stand here as the Representative of a free and enlightened constituency, who *think* and *speak* for themselves, without reference to what the President may *think*, or what he may threaten to do.

Now, sir, so far as our experience shows, the true interest and good of the country is best promoted by leaving all *domestic questions* to the legislatures of the country.

A few days ago, when the bill for establishing the territorial government of Ore-

was under consideration, I presented my views briefly, against clothing the Governor of that Territory with the *veto* power in any case whatever. I referred to the practical abuses which might grow up under this *odious* power, when the partial feelings and violent passions of a governor holding his office for four years by appointment from the President, might be exerted against the will of the people, as expressed by their representatives. And I alluded, in vindication of my opinions upon this subject, to the fact, that in many of the States, where the power of the *veto* was withheld from the governors, that their legislatures acted quite as judiciously, and as much for the *true* interests of the people, as when this extraordinary power was vested in the Governor. Look at the States of Delaware, Maryland, and Virginia, and to the State of Ohio, whose constitutions did not clothe their governors with the *veto* power. In Ohio, sir, the General Assembly of the State, consisting of 108 members—72 in the House, chosen annually, and 36 in the Senate, chosen biennially—were supposed by the framers of our State constitution, to be the safest depositories of the legislative power. And they did not even require the governor to sign a bill passed by a majority of both branches of the General Assembly. And the reasons are numerous and obvious. Why, sir, who is a governor or President? A mere man—imperfect and liable to all the passions and prejudices of any other man, in private or public life. And, as “in the multitude of counsellors there is safety,” surely the majority of both branches of any well organized legislature, who are fresh from the people, and directly responsible to them, is much more likely to judge best of what is most conducive to the public good, and what is best and safest in all emergencies. All are sworn to support the Constitutions, and all are responsible to the great source of all political power—the people.

And, sir, Ohio may well compare with any of her sister States, where the *veto* power is *lodged* by their constitutions with their governors. I will not particularize, but merely allude in general terms to the fact, and point with pride and pleasure to her rapid advances in population and wealth, and to the progress of improvements in all the departments of human skill, industry, and labor in that State, to verify what I say: The population of the State of Ohio, in 1800, was 45,365; in 1810, 230,760; in 1820, 581,434; in 1830, 937,678; in 1840, 1,519,167; and now, in 1848, as we believe, the State contains about 2,000,000 of inhabitants, who enjoy as much abundance, comfort, and happiness, as can be found in the same number in any part of the world.

Mr. Chairman, in the debate, a day or two since, on this subject, a gentleman from Missouri (Mr. GREEN) inquired, somewhat tauntingly, of one of my colleagues, (Mr. SCHENCK,) “What was the amount of the public debt of Ohio?” And the answers are before the country. I cordially concur in all that was then said by my colleague; and will now add, that the public debt of Ohio is between 19 and 20 millions of dollars, and that the interest thereon is regularly paid. That interest will always be paid, and, in due time, the principal will be paid also. Let me say, to satisfy those who are concerned in knowing, that, besides our splendid works of internal improvement, connecting the lakes with the Ohio river by two navigable canals, with various branches, that a railroad connects the beautiful city of Cincinnati with Lake Erie; and that the public works now pay about half the interest on her public debt, and will soon pay all the interest. Besides, her 2,000,000 of inhabitants are industrious, enterprising, and intelligent—it being the first duty of every citizen to engage in some useful labor. I may add, that the list of taxable property on her tax duplicates largely exceeds \$400,000,000 in value; so that her public debt is comparatively small.

There then, sir, with one-tenth of the population of the United States, with twenty members on this floor, and paying one-tenth at least of the revenues of the country, what aid does Ohio get from the Federal Government? Nothing, sir, comparatively nothing, under any administration. Since the days of Andrew Jackson and now, what has Ohio obtained? When Congress proposes to improve the navigation of the Ohio river by an appropriation of \$40,000 for that purpose, or by ap-

appropriating \$20,000 to improve the harbors on Lake Erie, Mr. Polk says—"No, *forbid*." We get nothing, sir, save the empty honor of having one of the host of our defeated *Locofoco* candidates sent to South America as Minister, to brave the climate and mosquitoes, and to dance with a Brazilian Queen.

But, Mr. Chairman, the time is coming, and that rapidly, when Ohio will be heard, not only in her popular elections, but in the administration of the General Government. We vote freely all the necessary supplies for your army and navy, for your fortifications, and your civil list, and we demand, in the name of the people we represent, an equal share in the benefits of the General Government.

The State of Ohio gave her vote, in 1844, for HENRY CLAY for President, as she had given a Whig vote in 1836 and in 1840. And by her vote in 1844 she disclaimed the opinions of Mr. Polk, and the party that sustained him. She then pronounced against the annexation of Texas. But when Mr. Polk came into office, and involved us in a war with Mexico, after the annexation, "unnecessarily and unconstitutionally," as we have voted in this House, Ohio did not fail in her duty to the country. She promptly obeyed the calls upon her patriotism, and furnished all the men that the Administration asked her to furnish. It has been variously estimated that, with the five volunteer regiments, and the men recruited by officers of the regular army, at the numerous recruiting stations in that State, that Ohio has furnished from 6,000 to 8,000 men for the Mexican war. This large number comprised men of both parties, Whigs and Democrats. And notwithstanding the base and unfounded insinuation of the President of the United States, in his message of December, 1846, that those who opposed his policy in the beginning of that war were giving "aid and comfort to the enemy," I affirm boldly, that, of the Ohio volunteers, quite an equal moiety were Whigs, in principle and in action, who freely volunteered, and served with honor and credit, in the Mexican war. There were men of my own district, belonging to the 1st regiment of Ohio volunteers, who served with distinguished gallantry and efficiency at the storming of Monterey. I might refer to one of the captains in that dreadful conflict, who was found cool and collected, in the thickest of the fight, leading his men to duty and to victory, and who, like MITCHELL and HAMER, (the lamented, and generous, and patriotic Hamer, whom I well knew,) on that memorable occasion, aided, under the direction of ZACHARY TAYLOR, to carry the strongly fortified city of Monterey, and "shrunk from no responsibility." This captain, when the call was made upon Ohio, was a Whig editor in my own district, a highly respectable lawyer, and who held the office of major general of Ohio militia; and yet he, prompted by the noblest impulses of patriotism, enlisted as a private, was elected a captain, and served, with the truest fidelity and honor, in the Mexican war. I might cite numerous instances to show how utterly unfounded was such an insinuation, and how unworthy the high station of a President of the United States. But I forbear.

I will now proceed, Mr. Chairman, to another subject—one which, at this time, is exciting much interest and attention in the country. Now we are at peace with Mexico, and have, by the treaty with that Republic, acquired New Mexico and California, thereby adding a large extent of territory to our former possessions. We have passed a bill in this House to establish a territorial government in Oregon; and it is deemed necessary by many that we should at once extend our laws over California and New Mexico. And the plan for the government of these Territories has been the subject of much discussion and careful examination by Congress. It is well known that a decisive majority in this House is in favor of inserting in any law for the government of these Territories that may be passed by Congress, a provision for the perpetual exclusion of slavery therefrom, in the same manner, that, by the Ordinance of 1787, it was prohibited forever in the territory northwest of the Ohio river. In a matter of so much interest as that, I have endeavored to obtain the most correct information; and I have taken extraordinary pains to ascertain the true history of this Ordinance. I examined all the journals of Congress under the Confederation, and found they contained very meagre reports of its origin. I searched the

libraries of Congress, and found that the journals of Congress, under the Confederation, and in the early history of the Government under the Constitution, contained nothing satisfactory as to the origin of the first plan for governing the western country. By the kindness of the Secretary of State, I have been permitted to examine the manuscripts upon the files of the State Department, and I find the valuable archives in that Department, as connected with the early history of the country, show some most interesting facts in relation to the Ordinance of 1787; and I note, that, while the *foreign* correspondence of the Government, during the Revolutionary war, and subsequently, has in part been printed, yet the *domestic* correspondence, in some respects the most interesting, has never been published. I hope the time may soon come, when Congress will cause many of those old manuscripts, and portions of that domestic correspondence, to be published, for they would add valuable volumes of information, to which the public has not now convenient access, to the public libraries of the country.

The result of my search at the State Department was this: I found that the *original report for the government of the Western territory* was made on the first day of March, 1784, by a committee, consisting of Mr. JEFFERSON, of Virginia, Mr. CHASE, of Maryland, and Mr. HOWELL, of Rhode Island; that this report is in the handwriting of Mr. JEFFERSON, and contains, amongst other things, a section prohibiting slavery in the Western territory after the year 1800.

I applied to the Secretary of State for a copy of that *original report*, and the proceedings thereupon, so far as those unpublished manuscripts show them; but it being, as he stated, contrary to the rules of the Department, to give copies of those papers except upon a call officially made, and not having time to obtain a copy thereof by the usual mode of a resolution calling for the same by this House, I am compelled to refer to the "*Notes of the ordinance of 1787*," compiled from the same manuscripts, and the journals of Congress, and communicated to the National Intelligencer, dated "Washington, August 20th, 1847," by PETER FORCE, esq., a highly intelligent gentleman of this city. These notes I have carefully compared with the originals, and believe them entirely correct.—See Appendix.

It may be seen by these manuscripts and proceedings that the original section, prohibiting slavery in the Western territory after the year 1800, was stricken out on the 19th day of April, 1784, on the motion of Mr. Spaight, of North Carolina. This plan was thereupon adopted, on the 23d April, 1784; and was the law of the land, until repealed by the Ordinance of 1787; that is, for about three years. On the 16th March, 1785, a motion was made by Mr. King, seconded by Mr. Ellery, that the following proposition be committed:

"That there shall be neither slavery nor involuntary servitude in any of the States described in the resolve of Congress of the 23d of April, 1784, otherwise than in the punishment of crimes, whereof the party shall have been personally guilty; and that this regulation shall be an article of compact, and remain a fundamental principle of the constitutions between the thirteen original States, and each of the States described in the said resolve of the 23d of April, 1784."

This proposition was committed, but was not adopted as a part of the resolve of Congress of the 23d April, 1784.

Several committees were afterwards appointed to prepare a plan for the temporary government of the *Western* territory, and a report was made, but no final action was had, until the 13th day of July, 1787, when "*An ordinance for the government of the Territory of the United States northwest of the river Ohio*," was adopted by the unanimous vote of eight States represented in Congress at that time.

The committee who reported this celebrated ordinance consisted of Mr. Carrington, of Virginia, Mr. Dane, of Massachusetts, Mr. R. H. Lee, of Virginia, Mr. Kean, of South Carolina, and Mr. Smith, of New York, and as may be seen, was composed of three southern and two northern men.

Mr. CARRINGTON of Virginia (and not Mr. JEFFERSON, as has been sometimes erroneously supposed,) was the chairman of the committee who reported the Ordinance of 1787, as it was passed, and now stands on the journals. But the *first* ap-

pearance of this exclusion of slavery from the *Western territory*, appears, as I have before stated, in the report of Messrs. *Jefferson, Chase, and Howell*, made on the 1st March, 1784, and is now on file amongst the manuscripts preserved amongst the archives of the State Department.

I have been informed by a gentleman of the highest respectability, and who has had the best means of ascertaining the fact, that the section in the original plan, reported by *Mr. Jefferson*, prohibiting slavery in the Western territory after 1800, was so framed, for the purpose of enabling a few settlers at Vincennes, Kaskaskias, and other places in that territory, who were the owners of slaves in 1784, to make their arrangements, and provide for the change which that plan contemplated. But as that section was stricken out, and the whole original plan repealed by the Ordinance of 1787, slavery was prohibited by the terms of the 6th article, in the following words:

*Article the Sixth.* There shall be neither slavery nor involuntary servitude in the said territory, otherwise than in punishment of crimes whereof the party shall have been duly convicted: Provided, always, that any person escaping into the same, from whom labor or service is lawfully claimed in any one of the original States, such fugitive may be lawfully reclaimed and conveyed to the person claiming his or her labor or service as aforesaid.

The 2d section of the Ordinance of 1787, has a provision in favor of the inhabitants of much importance; and, as I believe, enabled the owners of slaves on the 13th July, 1787, the date of the ordinance, to retain them under the laws of Virginia, then in force among them, relative to the descent and conveyance of property. And by this provision a very small number of slaves were held after the date of the ordinance. Though it has been decided by the Supreme Court of the United States. (5th Peters, *P. Menand vs. Aspasia*, vol. 5, p. 504,) that a negro born of slave parents after the date of that ordinance, in the Northwestern territory, was free, even if the person was sold and taken to Missouri.

Thus much I have said to correct some erroneous impressions as to the origin of the Ordinance of 1787, and of the authorship of that provision, which looked from the first, to the prohibition of slavery in the Western territory.

I have voted to extend the provisions of this ordinance to the Territory of Oregon. I have voted against the miscalled "Compromise bill." And I shall in accordance with the resolution of the General Assembly of Ohio, at the last session, vote to insert similar provisions in any bill we may pass as to California and New Mexico. That resolution was presented by me in this House on the 3d day of May last, and is as follows:

*Resolved by the General Assembly of the State of Ohio,* That the provisions of the ordinance of Congress of one thousand seven hundred and eighty-seven, so far as the same relates to slavery, should be extended to any territory that may be acquired from Mexico by treaty or otherwise.

JOSEPH S. HAWKINS,

Speaker of the House of Representatives.

CHARLES B. GODDARD,

Speaker of the Senate.

February 25, 1848.

And, whilst I am willing and determined to stand by all the compromises of the Constitution, and all the lawful rights of our southern fellow citizens, I will never, by my vote, extend slavery to Oregon, or to the territory acquired from Mexico. Mr. Chairman, there seems to be some misapprehension in this committee as to the feelings of the people of Ohio on this subject. I believe, sir, that, in that State, we are all for free soil; and the effort of *Mr. Van Buren*, and his party of Barnburners, to distract the Whig party in Ohio on this subject will utterly fail. Did not *Van Buren* and his *locofoco* friends aid to bring *Texas* into the Union, and thereby extend slavery? Did they not aid to elect *James K. Polk*, and thereby promote and precipitate us into the war with Mexico? How, then, can any honest Whig give the credit for sincerity in their present desire to form a third party, by calling it a Free Soil party? The Whigs of Ohio understand *Van Buren* too well to be deceived by any such professions. Neither do the abolition efforts of *Garrison & Co.*, as reported of their meeting lately held in New York, where they avowed their design to dis-

in this Union, and break down the American churches, meet with any sympathy or response from either the Whig or Democratic party in Ohio. They despise such attempts in any and every quarter. No, sir; the people of Ohio love the union of these States; and they will never forget the paternal counsel of WASHINGTON, when, in his Farewell Address, in allusion to this subject, he said to the people of this country for all time:

"It is of infinite moment that you should properly estimate the immense value of your national union to your collective and individual happiness; that you should cherish a cordial, habitual attachment to it; accustoming yourselves to think and speak of it as of the palladium of your political safety and prosperity; watching for its preservation with jealous anxiety; discountenancing whatever may suggest even a suspicion, that it can in any event be abandoned; and indignantly frowning upon the dawn of any attempt to alienate any portion of our country from the rest, or to enfeeble the sacred ties which now link together the various parts."

Now, sir, I wish to say a few words as to the two candidates for the Presidency; and, as I have but a few moments to refer to the subject, I will say, that in addition to the many objections urged against *Levi Cass*, the candidate of the Democratic party, the whole country understands that he is pledged to carry out the doctrines of *James K. Polk*; and this is a fatal objection to him in my estimation.

And though our political opponents assert that *ZACHARY TAYLOR*, the Whig candidate for the Presidency, has no principles, they assert what they know, or ought to know, is not true; and I will now refer to some of the principles publicly avowed by him. In his letter to Capt. J. S. Allison of the 22d April, 1848, he says:

BATON ROUGE, April 22, 1848.

"DEAR SIR: My opinions have recently been so often misconceived and misrepresented, that I deem it due to myself, if not to my friends, to make a brief exposition of them upon the topics to which you have called my attention.

I have consented to the use of my name as a candidate for the Presidency. I have frankly avowed my own distrust of my fitness for that high station; but having, at the solicitation of many of my countrymen, taken my position as a candidate, I do not feel at liberty to surrender that position until my friends manifest a wish that I should retire from it. I will then most gladly do so. I have no private purposes to accomplish—no party projects to build up—no enemies to punish—nothing to serve my country.

I have been very often addressed by letter, and my opinions have been asked upon almost every question that might occur to the writers as affecting the interests of their country or their party. I have not always responded to these inquiries, for various reasons.

"I confess, whilst I have great cardinal principles which will regulate my political life, I am not sufficiently familiar with all the minute details of political legislation to give solemn pledges to exert my influence, if I were President, to carry out this or defeat that measure. I have no concealment. I hold no opinion which I would not readily proclaim to my assembled countrymen; but crude impressions upon matters of policy, which may be right to-day and wrong to-morrow, are, perhaps, not the best test of fitness for office. One who cannot be trusted without pledges, cannot be confided in merely on account of them.

"I will proceed, however, now to respond to your inquiries.

"First. I reiterate what I have often said—I am a Whig, but not an ultra Whig. If elected, I would not be the mere President of a party. I would endeavor to act independent of party domination. I should feel bound to administer the Government untrammelled by party schemes.

"Second. The veto power. The power given by the Constitution to the Executive to interpose his veto, is a high conservative power; but, in my opinion, should never be exercised except in cases of clear violation of the Constitution, or manifest haste and want of consideration by Congress. Indeed, I have thought that, for many years past, the known opinions and wishes of the Executive have exercised undue and injurious influence upon the legislative department of the Government; and for this cause I have thought our system was in danger of undergoing a great change from its true theory. The personal opinions of the individual who may happen to occupy the Executive chair, ought not to control the action of Congress upon questions of domestic policy; nor ought his objections to be interposed where questions of constitutional power have been settled by the various departments of Government, and acquiesced in by the people.

"Third. Upon the subject of the tariff, the currency, the improvement of our great highways, rivers, canals, and harbors, the will of the people, as expressed through their representatives in Congress, ought to be respected and carried out by the Executive.

"Fourth. The Mexican war. I sincerely rejoice at the prospect of peace. My life has been devoted to arms; yet I look upon war at all times, and under all circumstances, as a national calamity, to be avoided if compatible with national honor. The principles of our Government, as well as its true policy, are opposed to the subjugation of other nations, and the dismemberment of other countries by conquest. In the language of the great Washington, "Why should we quit our own, to stand on foreign ground?" In the Mexican war, our national honor has been vindicated—amply vindicated; and



in dictating terms of peace, we may well afford to be forbearing, and even magnanimous, to our fallen foe.

"These are my opinions upon the subjects referred to by you; and any reports or publications, written or verbal, from any source, differing in any essential particular from what is here written, are unauthorized and untrue."

"I do not know that I shall again write upon the subject of national politics. I shall engage in no schemes, no combinations, no intrigues. If the American people have not confidence in me, they ought not to give me their suffrages. If they do not, you know me well enough to believe me when I declare I shall be content. I am too old a soldier to murmur against such high authority."

"To Capt. J. S. ALLISON."

"Z. TAYLOR."

The principles herein avowed are Whig principles, and meet with a hearty response from the whole Whig party of the country.

Gen. Taylor has announced to the country that he is a Whig. He gives his opinions of the *veto* power. Upon the subjects of the tariff, the currency, the improvement of our great highways, rivers, lakes, and harbors, he says, the will of the people ought to be respected and carried out by the Executive. He says that the personal opinions of the President ought not to control the action of Congress upon questions of *domestic policy*. In his letter to Mr. Ingersoll he said: "At the last Presidential election, I was decidedly in favor of *Mr. Clay's* election, and would *now* prefer seeing him in that office to any individual in the Union." And, having been made the Whig candidate of the whole country, every Whig will unite cordially in his support. His admirable private and public character—having been by profession a soldier, but "rejoicing in peace," and on every occasion, during the war with Mexico, exhibiting the greatest courage and skill, with the utmost humanity—has endeared him to all true American hearts.

The character of ZACHARY TAYLOR, not only as one of the greatest generals of the age, but as an honest man and true patriot, is known and appreciated by the people. And our opponents might as well strive to stop the mighty course of the Mississippi, as it rolls its great volume of waters from the Rocky Mountains and the Alleghanies to the Gulf of Mexico, as to prevent the powerful voice of the people from bearing him triumphantly to the White House on the 4th of March next. The opposition of factions have no terrors for me, for I believe Ohio will cast her vote for ZACHARY TAYLOR by a large majority; and I believe he will undoubtedly be elected the next President by a vast majority of the people of the United States.

## APPENDIX.

On the first of March, 1784, a committee, consisting of Mr. JEFFERSON, of Virginia, Mr. CHASE, of Maryland, and Mr. HOWELL, of Rhode Island, submitted to Congress the following plan for the temporary government of the Western Territory:

The committee appointed to prepare a plan for the temporary government of the Western Territory: have agreed to the following resolutions:

*Resolved*, That the territory ceded or to be ceded by individual States to the United States, whensoever the same shall have been purchased of the Indian inhabitants and offered for sale by the United States, shall be formed into additional States, bounded in the following manner, as nearly as such cessions will admit; that is to say, northwardly and southwardly by parallels of latitude, so that each State shall comprehend, from south to north, two degrees of latitude, beginning to count from the completion of thirty-one degrees north of the equator; but any territory northwardly of the forty-seventh degree shall make part of the State next below. And eastwardly and westwardly they shall be bounded, those on the Mississippi by that river on one side and the meridian of the lowest point of the rapids of the Ohio on the other; and those adjoining on the east, by the same meridian on their western side, and on their eastern by the meridian of the western cape of the mouth of the Great Kanawha. And the territory eastward of this last meridian, between the Ohio, Lake Erie, and Pennsylvania, shall be one State.

That the settlers within the territory so to be purchased and offered for sale shall, either on their own petition or on the order of Congress, receive authority from them, with appointments of time and place, for their free males of full age to meet together for the purpose of establishing a temporary government to adopt the constitution and laws of any one of these States, so that such laws nevertheless shall be subject to alteration by their ordinary legislature, and to erect, subject to a like alteration, counties or townships for the election of members for their legislature.

That such temporary government shall only continue in force in any State until it shall have acquired twenty thousand free inhabitants, when, giving due proof thereof to Congress, they shall receive from them authority, with appointments of time and place, to call a convention of representatives to establish a permanent constitution and government for themselves.

*Provided*, That both the temporary and permanent governments be established on these principles as their basis:

1. That they shall forever remain a part of the United States of America.
2. That in their persons, property, and territory, they shall be subject to the Government of the United States in Congress assembled, and to the Articles of Confederation in all those cases in which the original States shall be so subject.

3. That they shall be subject to pay a part of the federal debts, contracted or to be contracted, to be apportioned on them by Congress according to the same common rule and measure by which apportionments thereof shall be made on the other States.

4. That their respective governments shall be in republican forms, and shall admit no person to be a citizen who holds any hereditary title.

5. That after the year 1800 of the Christian era there shall be neither slavery nor involuntary servitude in any of the said States, otherwise than in punishment of crimes, whereof the party shall have been duly convicted to have been personally guilty.

That whenever any of the said States shall have, of free inhabitants, as many as shall then be in any one of the least numerous of the thirteen original States, such State shall be admitted by its delegates into the Congress of the United States on an equal footing with the said original States, after which the assent of two-thirds of the United States, in Congress assembled, shall be requisite in all those cases wherein, by the confederation, the assent of nine States is now required, provided the consent of nine States to such admission may be obtained according to the eleventh of the articles of confederation. Until such admission by their delegates into Congress, any of the said States, after the establishment of their temporary government, shall have authority to keep a sitting member in Congress, with a right of debating, but not of voting.

That the territory northward of the forty-fifth degree, that is to say, of the completion of forty-five degrees from the equator, and extending to the Lake of the Woods, shall be called *Sylvania*; that of the territory under the forty-fifth and forty-fourth degrees, that which lies westward of Lake Michigan, shall be called *Michigan*; and that which is eastward thereof, within the peninsula formed by the lakes and waters of Michigan, Huron, St. Clair, and Erie, shall be called *Cheronesus*, and shall include any part of the peninsula which may extend above the forty-fifth degree. Of the territory under the forty-third and forty-second degrees, that to the westward, through which the Assenisipi or Rock River runs, shall be called *Assenisipia*; and that to the eastward, in which are the fountains of the Wabash, the two Miamies of Ohio, the Wabash, the Illinois, the Miami of the Lake, and the

Sandusky rivers, shall be called *Metropotamia*. Of the territory which lies under the forty-first and fortieth degrees, the western, through which the river Illinois runs, shall be called *Illinoia*; that next adjoining, to the eastward, *Saratoga*; and that between this last and Pennsylvania, and extending from the Ohio to Lake Erie, shall be called *Washington*. Of the territory which lies under the thirty-ninth and thirty-eighth degrees, to which shall be added so much of the point of land within the fork of the Ohio and Mississippi as lies under the thirty-seventh degree, that to the westward, within and adjacent to which are the confluences of the rivers Wabash, Shawanee, Tanisee, Ohio, Illinois, Mississippi, and Missouri, shall be called *Polyptotamia*; and that to the eastward, further up the Ohio, otherwise called the Pelisipi, shall be called *Pelísipia*.

That all the preceding articles shall be formed into a charter of compact, shall be duly executed by the President of the United States, in Congress assembled, under his hand and the seal of the United States, shall be promulgated, and shall stand as fundamental conditions between the thirteen original States and those newly described, unalterable but by the joint consent of the United States, in Congress assembled, and of the particular State within which such alteration is proposed to be made.

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